4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

the village to find dependent relatives—siblings, cousins, nephews, nieces— 596
who, unable to make a go of it elsewhere, are accepted into a relative's
family, sometimes to the extent of eventually taking over the headship of
the family. Sometimes, on the initiative and invitation of an elderly or
lonely relative, an entire nuclear family will be asked to take over or share a
household. Children of poor or "inconvenienced" families (where a new 596
child is born before the first is weaned, where there are too many children 597
for the mother to handle comfortably, where a youngster is simply being
"troublesome") are adopted or "borrowed" by other villagers for varying
periods of time. This is done preferably by relatives, sometimes by neighbors, and often, in the case of boys, by the monastery, where the children become hand-servants to the monks and are supposed to absorb, by a kind of osmotic process, righteous ways of behaving. (Of my three male life history informants, two were given over to relatives at the ages of two, the third at the age of eight; one spent his childhood with four different families, another with five families; one describes his adolescence as "wandering from place to place." The psychological implications of such displacement should not be underestimated.) On occasion, two independent 596
nuclear families—almost always connected by some kinship tie—will join [594]
together for convenience to share cooking facilities, in which case they effectively become a single extended family. And in some cases, although rare, one will encounter adult children living in independent households but handing over their income to a parent, living in still another home, who disburses the proceeds when necessary.

On the other side, it is common practice in Bang Chan now for a 596
husband to be away for four or five months at a time earning money in 591
Bangkok, or during the dry season on a vegetable farm, returning home to [464]
visit his wife and children whenever opportunity permits, with or without
funds. The wife may still maintain their household, but often returns to 596
live with her own parents.[7] In a similar vein, although obviously more 586
extreme, it is not unusual to find families in Bang Chan which have simply 182
"disintegrated," as the villagers say. Much depends here on the circumstances of family members. Bang Chaners usually reserve the term "disintegrated" for families that no longer have the economic wherewithal or justification for staying together as functioning units. In these instances, family members simply go their separate ways, if possible back to their families of orientation or to other relatives, husbands perhaps into the monkhood, and the children to whomever will take them. Most frequently, [578]
"disintegration" is characteristic of very poor families, and in the minds of

[7] This pattern may be related to the old *corvée* labor pattern when able-bodied village men were away from their families for extended periods of time. [466] [651] [174]

54

125 42.c. IF DISAGREE: For what various reasons do you disagree?

[369]

If Disagreement (See code at end)

[829]

[793] 43. Do you agree or disagree that all priests are honest and moral men?

[792]

X. Agree	197
Y. Disagree	90
O. Undecided	40
— No Answer	6

[829] 44. Do you think it is right or wrong for a Thai to marry a Chinese?

1. Right	55
2. Wrong	182
3. Unascertainable	91
— No Answer	5

[775] 45. Do you believe that ghosts bother people? Strongly, somewhat, or not at all?

4. Strongly	40
5. Somewhat	136
6. Not at all	124
7. Unascertainable	28
— No Answer	5

[653] 46.a. During the past year, have there been any activities for the public welfare in BC Wat, or not, to which you contributed labor?

1. Yes	231
2. No	102

b. IF YES: For what various activities did you contribute labor?

_____

_____

c. During the past year or so, have there been any activities for the public welfare in the wat, or not, to which you contributed money or goods?

1. Yes	264
2. No	63
— No Answer	6

[651] d. IF YES: For what various activities did you contribute money or goods?

_____

_____

47.a. How about activities not connected with the wat or with religious ceremonies in the home. During the past year, have there been any such activities for the public welfare in BC-KY, to which you contributed labor, or not?

1. Yes	94
2. No	232
3. Unascertainable	7

Question 42.c. (Cont'd)

Need for Money in Bangkok (Only happy there when have plenty of money)	6	125 369
Amount of effort in earning a living (Have to work every day there	4	829
Other reasons (Too many poor people there, many illnesses there, the life of the people there depends on the farmer, people from Bangkok always go to the country when anything bad happens, people can be happy both places, different people have different hearts)	12	
No Answer	4	
Don't know	5	

Question 46.b. For what various activities did you contribute labor? 125 653

Earth work	
Earth work at Wat	18
Earth work at Mosque	7
Earth work, unspecified (digging dirt, filling low places, digging Klong, loading and unloading earth and bricks)	53
Cement Work	
Cement work at Wat (moved cement bags, laid concrete floor)	12
Cement w ork, unspecified (building cement sidewalks, helped make concrete, poured concrete)	14
Building and Repairs	
Building sala (pavilion, repairing pavilion)	51
Building mosque (repairing Surao porch)	8
Built priest house, construction work in wat, latrine in Wat, repair crematorium	8
Building bridge	21
Building road	13
Constructionwork, unspecified (carried posts, repair a building, carpentry)	7
Services	
At Wat fair (helped cook and serve, helped manage, sweeping)	27
At Surao fair (helped cook and serve)	3
Services, unspecified (boiled water, cooked, carried water)	15
Guilding the gold leaf, miscellaneous labor at footprint guilding festival)	7
Priest's funeral (cooked, helped at cremation)	7
Other (served at Katlin ceremony, solicited money for Wat)	3

Question 46.d. For what various activities did you contribute money or goods? 125 431 651

To the Wat, unspecified	19
Contribution, unspecified	19
Construction activities	
To build pavilion (sala), to repair pavilion	57
To make path, build street on Wat grounds	27

125 Question 16.d. (Cont'd)

431

651

Construction activities (Cont'd)

To the Wat (to repair Wat, construction in Wat, fixing walls)	27
Contribution for building materials (buy cement, concrete floor, wood and tin, for new cement sidewalks, water tank)	21
To Surao (general fund, repair)	9
To build a bridge	8
To buy a generator	6
To build priest's house bathroom	5
To build preaching hall	3

Ceremonials

[796]
[764]

For ceremonies, unspecified	12
To guild the golden leaf	27
To cremation (to build crematorium; to cremate father, people without relatives; to build corpse go-down; priest's funeral)	12
To Wat fair	10
Other (to Katlim, to revise the Buddhist sacred book, to ordain priest, for building Buddha figure, to New Year festival, for dancing girls)	11
To Surao fair	4

Food and related donations

Gave rice, unspecified	5
Gave rice (food) for Wat, priests	18
Gave rice for Wat fair	7
To buy utensils (including cooking utensils) for Wat	6
To buy utensils for Surao	6
Gave food to Surao	1

427 author's father who gave this man an initial capital of 600
556 baht when he made his start in Bangchan some thirty years ago. He is now a millionaire and a father-in-law of a former top military officer.

427 Again it is the author's impression that, from the viewpoint of the villagers' best interests, the good side of absentee landism seems to outweigh the bad side.

427 Going back to the forces of demand for and supply of
434 rice land, it should be noticed that, as was so often the
435 case, free competition in the classical economist's sense did not exist in Bangchan where rents were often sticky. There was a wide range of different rent rates for fields of almost homogeneous nature as far as agronomic properties were concerned. Preference for prospective tenants was observed to have a personal rather than economic basis even on the part of the local landlords who were found to be most sensitive to rent rates. When a new higher rent rate was to be charged, it was observed that the most plausible excuse had to be found and presented to the tenants by the landlord. An example was the general raise of rent in 1953 when the new land tax was raised from 0.30 to 4.00 baht per rai, whereupon most local landlords immediately raised their rent from seven tang to eight tang per rai. One tang of
[651] paddy, however, was worth nine baht. It is seen, thus, that as a result of an increase of the government revenue of 3.70 baht per rai the local landlords also received an extra 5.30 baht per rai from their tenants who alone had to suffer an increase cost of nine baht per rai.